
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 10, 1891.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McMILLAN, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany S. 3870.]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (S. 3870) to provide for the purchase of a site and the erection of buildings for the Girls' Reform School of the District of Columbia, have considered the same and submit the following:

A bill incorporating the Girls' Reform School became a law July 9, 1888, and this bill is in the nature of supplemental legislation upon the subject which will enable the trustees of the school to carry into practical operation the franchises given in the act of incorporation, thereby providing for the District a girls' reform school similar to that now established and used for boys. The bill was referred to the District Commissioners for their views, and copy of reply from them is attached and made a part of this report.

Attached to this report are letters from Maj. William G. Moore, superintendent of Metropolitan police; from Hon. E. F. Bingham, chief justice of the supreme court of the District of Columbia; and from Hon. T. F. Miller, judge of the police court of the District of Columbia. These gentlemen, in the letters addressed to the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Charitable Institutions, set forth very clearly the imperative need of providing a reform school for girls to supplement the work of the reform school for boys already established.

Your committee recommend the passage of the bill amended to read as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, one half of said sum to be appropriated out of the revenues of the District of Columbia, for the purchase of a site and the erection or alteration and furnishing of buildings for the Girls' Reform School of the District of Columbia, said sum to be expended by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia and to be immediately available.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, July 12, 1890.

SIR: The Commissioners have the honor to reply to your request "as to the propriety of the proposed legislation (Senate bill 3870) to provide for the purchase of a site and erection of a building for the Girls' Reform School of the District of Columbia," that, in their judgment, the proposed legislation is imperatively needed.

2 GIRLS' REFORM SCHOOL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

The Commissioners, in their charge of the workhouses at the Washington Asylum, are constantly reminded of the necessity for an institution where young girls can be permanently provided for in a reformatory, where constant attention, until majority, can be afforded, instead of the ruinous treatment of successive "ninety days" in the workhouse, with the vilest associations, during these intermittent detentions.

It is said that nine-tenths of the drunkards of the land are made before the age of twenty-one. And so of most all criminals including both sexes. We earnestly and hopefully recommend the proposed legislation.

Respectfully,

J. W. DOUGLASS,
President.

Hon. JNO. J. INGALLS,
Chairman Committee on District of Columbia, United States Senate.

DEPARTMENT METROPOLITAN POLICE,
Washington, D. C., April 1, 1890.

Respectfully returned to the honorable Commissioners of the District of Columbia. It is my opinion that there should be in the District of Columbia a reform school for girls. While boys under the age of sixteen who are convicted of crime or misdemeanor may be committed to a reform school provided exclusively for them, girls liable to punishment by imprisonment must be sent to the workhouse or jail, to grow from bad to worse and to graduate in crime. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1889, one hundred and thirty-five girls under sixteen years and seven hundred and forty-two under twenty-one years were taken into custody. Of this number two hundred and sixty-three were sent to the workhouse, ninety-one committed to the jail, and two hundred and forty-one complaints were dismissed or nolle prossed. These figures do not include girls taken from houses of ill repute, or gathered from the streets engaged in lewdness, who were transferred to their parents, in order that they might be saved from the contaminating influences of the workhouse or jail.

There are but two private institutions here for the care and reformation of evil-disposed girls, and neither has legal authority for their detention or receives persons of color.

WM. G. MOORE,
Major and Superintendent Metropolitan Police.

SUPREME COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, D. C., March 3, 1890.

DEAR SIR: The justices of the supreme court of the District of Columbia have been advised by Mills Dean, esq., secretary of the board of trustees of the Girls' Reform School, that you desire their opinion as to the necessity of such an institution as provision is made for in House bill No. 5967.

The justices of this court have considered the proposition and are unanimously of the opinion that provision for such a reformatory in this District is imperatively demanded.

Annually hundreds of young girls come before the courts in this city charged with offenses more or less serious, usually those who are without any proper or efficient guardianship, whose reformation under proper auspices might be hoped for. If punished, they must be imprisoned to mingle with felons of every grade, with a certainty that their moral status will only be degraded thereby. If released from the particular charge preferred, they are turned loose to pursue their downward course to utter ruin.

What is needed is, that the law shall provide that all such girls shall be placed in an institution where they can be controlled and disciplined, be taught good morals and at least the elements of an education, learn to work and to acquire industrious habits. Such institutions elsewhere have proved successful as well for girls as boys.

We therefore do most heartily approve the provisions of the bill before mentioned and most earnestly request its passage by the present Congress.

Very respectfully,

E. F. BINGHAM,
Chief Justice Supreme Court of the District of Columbia.

Hon. MILTON DE LANO,
Chairman of Subcommittee of House Committee on the District of Columbia.

POLICE COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, D. C., February 23, 1890.

DEAR SIR: At the request of Mills Dean, esq., secretary of the board of trustees of the Girls' Reform School of the District of Columbia, I write to give expression to my views in regard to House bill 5967, appropriating money for the purchase of a site and erection of buildings for said reform school. I can not express too strongly my opinion as to the necessity for the establishment of a reform school for girls in the District of Columbia. It is almost a daily occurrence to have girls of tender years brought before me charged with various offenses. The report of the superintendent of police for the last year shows that seven hundred and forty-two girls under twenty-one years of age were arrested in the District of Columbia during that period. "Disorderly conduct," "petty larceny," "profanity," "vagrancy," "assault and battery," "simple assault," "intoxication," and "suspicion" were among the charges upon which they were arrested; of this number a considerable portion ought to be sent to a reformatory institution.

There being no place in the District of Columbia to which these girls can be sent other than the United States jail and the District workhouse, and the longest sentences to the workhouse possible under the law being ninety days, it is unnecessary to say that I am often at a loss as to what disposition to make of some of the offenders. They are often without home or friends, living in an atmosphere of vice and demoralization, and to send them to the jail or the workhouse is simply to confine them for a short period, to return, when enlarged, to their old associates. These reformatory institutions having been so effective with boys, it is difficult to see why their benefits should not be extended to girls. Hoping that this most important measure may pass, I am,

Yours respectfully,

T. F. MILLER,
Judge Police Court, District of Columbia.

Hon. MILTON DE LANO,
*Chairman Subcommittee on Charitable Institutions,
House Committee on the District of Columbia.*

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